

Community Services and Recreation

DRAFT MINUTES/APPROVED

To: Parks & Recreation Commission Members

From: Gerardo Sorkin, Director

Re: Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting March 16, 2009

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Mary Lou Stamp at 7:00 p.m.

I. Attendance:

Commissioners Present: Al Centone, Frank Montagna, Joe Capucci, Mary Lou Stamp, Susan Puzycki, Richard Wilson

Commissioners Absent: Suzanne Lewis

Staff Present : Gerardo Sorkin, Director of Community Services and Recreation
Eileen Pettit, Assistant Director of Recreation
Lynn Sadosky, Director of Public Works
Victor Palma, Superintendent of Public Works & Field Operations
Carla Pelliccio, Secretary

II. Acceptance of Minutes:

In the January 16, 2009 meeting minutes, it was indicated that correspondence regarding unregistered motor vehicle activity on the Max Sinoway field had taken place. Mary Lou Stamp made one correction: This unregistered activity took place at Sinoway's Pond, NOT Max Sinoway Field. Frank Montagna made a motion to accept the minutes, as corrected, seconded by Joe Capucci.

III. Correspondence:

A letter was received by Gerardo Sorkin from Alan Golia, President of *American Stitch and Print* regarding not being notified that he will not be this year's supplier of shirts for the North Haven Girls Softball League. Ms. Stamp asked that a copy of this letter be provided to each commissioner and this topic be discussed at the next meeting.

IV. Director's Report:

Gerardo Sorkin, Director of Community Services and Recreation
Recreation:

Spring registration has begun for both recreation and pool programs. Spring registration booklets were provided to all commissioners.

The Annual Easter Extravaganza will take place on Sunday, April 4, 2009 at the Recreation Center from 10:30am-12:00pm. The indoor event includes pictures with the Easter Bunny, face painting, top hat and bonnet contest, entertainment and refreshments provided by McDonald's. At the conclusion of the event, each child will receive a bag of chocolate eggs.

The 16th Annual Fishing Derby is scheduled for Saturday, May 2, 2009 at Sinoway Pond on Upper State Street. Once again, over 300 children are expected to register for this event.

Planning for the summer programs continue. Day Camp, Playgrounds and Little Rec'ers will run from June 29 through July 31, 2009.

Planning for Music Under the Stars 2009 continues. The series will begin on Tuesday, June 30th and conclude on Tuesday, August 11, 2009. A great line-up has been put together. All concerts will be on Tuesday evenings. The performance lineup was provided to all commissioners.

Pool hours are changing as of June 29th. The adult and open swim times will be switched. This modification has been made in order to accommodate other programs, while reducing operating expenses.

Repair work will be done at the pool. There are damaged and missing tiles on the pool deck. Three companies were contacted to get quotes. East Side Flooring came in with the lowest quote. Work will be done on a Saturday afternoon after hours. The pool will need to be closed on Sunday to let the tile set. Closing on Sunday should impact less people.

Finally, the 22nd Annual 5K Road Race co-sponsored by the NHHS PTSA and Community Services and Recreation is scheduled for Sunday, April 5, 2009. Flyers detailing this event were provided to all commissioners.

Summer Recruitment: Mr. Sorkin reported that they have established and implemented guidelines for this process. Available positions and respective job descriptions are now posted on the town website and applications are being accepted. Advertisements have also been placed in the local newspapers and flyers have been posted at the Middle School and High school. The intention of establishing these guidelines was to allow the opportunity to new youth (18 and older) who may not have had the chance to work in this program in the past. Applications are accepted from March 12th through April 17, 2009.

Lynn Sadosky, Director of Public Works

Scheduled Max Sinoway Baseball for 2009 season (April 25 – June 30) for fields including, Montowese Nos. 1 – 4, Blakeslee, Green Acres Elementary (3 Fields), Clintonville, Gateway (all fields expect lighted softball), ACES at Millroad, Brookfield (2 fields), Bailey Road and Field on Elm Street (behind North Haven High School).

Request received for a permit to be issued to Max Sinoway Baseball for use of practice field on Elm Street behind North Haven High School.

Scheduled North Haven Soccer Club for Memorial, Rock Road and Ridge Road fields during the day hours from March 30 - June 28, 2009.

Scheduled North Haven Lacrosse Club for Montowese (Rock Road) and Ridge Road fields in the evening hours for practice from April 1 – June 28, 2009 and for use of the Recreation Field and the Aces Lacrosse field from April 1 - June 28, 2009 (day and evening) for games and practice and use of Bailey Road 'Practice Football Field' for practice from April 1 – June 26, 2009 (evening only).

Scheduled Community Services and Recreation for Grover Wyman Field and Gateway Field #1 for Adult Softball from April 20 – September 17, 2009 (5 – 11 p.m.). Also, scheduled Ridge Road School field for soccer camp and the Recreation Center field for “Fun Sports Camp” from April 13 – April 17, 2009.

Scheduled Community Services and Recreation for Brook field for field hockey camp from July 13 – 17, 2009 and Montowese field for 'Maroon and White Camp', 'Pitching and Catching Camp', 'Baseball Hitting Camp' from August 3 - 8, 2009 and for 'Advanced Baseball Camp' for July 20 – August 1, 2009.

Scheduled Community Services and Recreation for North Haven High School (Sports Complex) Maple Avenue field for softball camp from June 29 – July 7, 2009 and the Practice field for Quarterback and Receiver Camp from July 8 – August 8, 2009.

Scheduled North Haven High School for varsity Baseball, sub-varsity baseball, varsity softball, junior varsity softball, middle school softball, track (runners), track (throwers), girls lacrosse, boys lacrosse, and boys and girls tennis from March 23 – June 12, 2009.

Scheduled North Haven Girls Softball League for Gateway fields (Nos. 1 – 7) for April 26 – July 28, 2009.

Brook field will be unavailable and rested on SUNDAYS due to multiple nearby residential requests. This has been communicated to the various clubs and leagues.

Following the Director's report by Ms. Sadosky, Victor Palma noted that some of the items reported are not etched in stone as they are still in process of being reviewed and finalized. They continue to attempt to accommodate everyone's needs as best they can.

Joe Capucci asked Mr. Palma will the fields be ready for the Spring based on the fact that we had such a wet winter. Mr. Palma replied that that there are already crews working on all fields getting them cleaned up.

V. Old Business:

Guidelines for Vanacore Field were distributed and were reviewed by Lynn Sadosky.

The guidelines were prepared to address many of the common issues, which arise during field use throughout the various athletic seasons. These guidelines were put in place to allow for the Town's Department of Public Works to better maintain the condition of Vanacore Field as well enhance the safety of those involved with athletics on the field.

After reviewing these guidelines, Mary Lou Stamp asked for clarification that Mr. Palma would have the final say regarding making the postponement/ cancellation decision. Mr. Palma agreed.

Frank Montagna made a motion to accept the guidelines for the use of Vanacore Field, seconded by Al Centone.

Application for Town Financial Assistance for Youth Leagues: A draft of this application was distributed and discussed by Gerardo Sorkin. In an attempt enhance the current system, Mr. Sorkin fine-tuned this application that has been used over the years, and in addition has created an evaluation in attempt to evaluate programs that are subsidized. The goal is to have each organization who receives a subsidy from the town provide feedback on how their program went. For example, "did the players develop the skills that the program intended, what were the gains?" These questions will provide a narrative that will compliment the financial report. The completed evaluation is intended to be returned at the conclusion of the season.

Ms. Stamp suggested one addition to the application: to ask the organization to list what their goals are within the application. Mr. Montagna asked if a date had been set for evaluations to be returned. In light

of the fact that different programs end at different times, Mr. Montagna suggested sixty (60) days from the conclusion of each league's respective program.

Mr. Centone asked Mr. Sorkin what was he looking to accomplish when he was putting together the evaluation. For example, if the skills have not been developed, then is the department willing to get involved to teach those skills? Mr. Sorkin stated that at this time, the purpose is to simply obtain information. Possible action steps to address any findings in the evaluation would occur at a later time.

Joe Capucci made a motion to accept the application, incorporating in these suggested additions made by the commissioners (adding the organization goals and 60-day completion deadline), seconded by Frank Montagna.

North Haven Soccer Club: following last meeting, Chris Heyle, President of the North Haven Soccer Club and Brenda Howlett had the opportunity to meet with Lynn Sadosky. The purpose was to check into the situation regarding Quinnipiac University fields. It was confirmed that the offer (the town working on a deal with Quinnipiac to lease the property to the town) was no longer on the table. The Soccer Club reiterated that they still have money set aside for a project and are looking for any space to operate on.

Frank Montagna asked Mr. Palma if any land was available to fulfill this request. Mr. Palma stated that Hanson Farms and another piece of land located behind Valentino's Farms were two possible locations, however would still be subject to approval and town meetings. Ms. Sadosky added that in light of the competing resources out there, even if they were to locate a piece of land (i.e a farm), the land would need to be prepared over the course of a few seasons before it would be ready. Mr. Wilson brought up a good point as to who would pay for the maintenance and upkeep of the field if this organization was to obtain a piece of land. Following this question was another posed by Mr. Capucci: if this organization fund raises on this land, would they be the only ones entitled to use it? Mr. Palma responded that this property would still be public property and shared among organizations through field coordination.

Mr. Palma complimented their North Haven Soccer Club's well developed plan, and suggested during that meeting that perhaps they should scale back and start a bit smaller.

Miller Correspondence: Mary Lou Stamp had the opportunity to speak with Chief DiCarlo regarding the letter from written in December by Michael and Ann Miller and reported back to the Commission. Ms. Stamp sent a letter to the Millers to which they responded with gracious thanks for giving attention to the issue of unregistered motor vehicle activity at Sinoway's Pond. They will continue to remain vigilant and call in when they see the activities taking place. Chief DiCarlo had communicated to Ms. Stamp that neighbors of Sinoway's Pond should also call in activities immediately as they see it occurring. These calls can remain anonymous.

VI. New Business:

Gerardo Sorkin, Director of Community Services and Recreation
Max Sinoway Baseball:

Max Sinoway has submitted their application requesting funding in the amount of \$6,000. While this amount was awarded as a special situation last year (excess use of the fields), historically \$4,000 has been the amount awarded. Therefore Mr. Sorkin would like to recommend that \$4,000 be given to the Max Sinoway for this year.

Frank Montagna made a motion to accept Mr. Sorkin's recommendation in the amount of \$4,000 to be awarded to Max Sinoway, seconded by Joe Capucci.

Lynn Sadosky, Director of Public Works

Request for waived fees by Jimmy V Foundation: Ms. Sadosky received letter regarding request to waive fees for use of Grover Wyman field and Gateway Number 1 field by Jimmy V Foundation ('Never Give up Softball Tournament') on August 7 – 9, 2009. Copies of the request letter were distributed to all commissioners. Ms. Sadosky would like to recommend that the fees be waived.

Al Centone made a motion to accept the recommendation of Ms. Sadosky, seconded by Susan Puzycki.

Request for waived fees by Festival of Angels: The Department of Public Works has received a request to waive fees for use of Showmobile and Memorial Field for the annual soccer tournament sponsored by the Festival of Angels for August 21 - 22, 2009. Ms. Sadosky would like to recommend that the fees be waived.

Al Centone made a motion to accept the recommendation of Ms. Sadosky, seconded by Rich Wilson.

Vanacore Field Maintenance Contract: The Department of Public Works revised bid specifications for Vanacore Field Maintenance Contract which is currently advertised with bids due to the Department of Finance on or before April 2, 2009.

Signage regarding pets in Town Parks: Frank Montagna reviewed the town website and found an ordinance that stated that dogs must be on leashes when they are in parks. Furthermore, there is an ordinance that states that you must pick up after your dogs. Mr. Montagna distributed copies of these articles from the town website to the commissioners.

Mr. Palma reiterated that two signs do exist on the town green which states, help keep your town clean, but no language regarding keeping your dog on a leash or picking up after them. Mr. Palma offered to post additional signs on the green as well as the other fields.

VII. Public Participation:

The North Haven Lacrosse Club

Mark Butterworth and John Uyeki from the North Haven Lacrosse Club took this opportunity to not only introduce themselves, but also present a concern and request to recommend an in-season switch of a grass field that they could have their team practice on.

Currently the North Haven Lacrosse Club plays on three fields in town: Recreation, ACES, and the practice football field. Mr. Butterworth highlighted a concern that they have; they feel that they are at a competitive disadvantage because there is no grass on these fields. By practicing on dirt fields, these teams have a difficulty playing games on the grass (specifically difficulty in scooping up the balls), when their teams play away at other towns. The proposed suggestion by Mr. Butterworth was that the team be able to practice on a grass field (either Montowese or Ridge Road field) in the evenings, and have the soccer team switch fields and play on the ACES field instead. By being able to practice and play on a grass field, this will greatly improve the quality of play for the members and their competitiveness.

My. Uyeki went on to describe the difficulty that the team has run into when practicing on ACES field, the dirt and debris that the players must contend with (specifically the goalies) when a shot is made. Visiting teams have also made complaints of this, and some have stated they would not return to play at ACES field.

Mr. Butterworth reported that 140 kids have already signed up for this year's program, and they anticipate an additional 15-20% more coming in to join before the season begins on April 1, 2009. My. Uyeki added that Lacrosse is the fastest growing sport in the country; they added a girls' program at the high school last year.

As a final point, Mr. Butterworth brought up the fact that many kids have been accepted into college on Lacrosse scholarships. He points out that as more kids go through their program who develop better skills, the more kids in town will be able to get accepted to more schools on Lacrosse scholarships.

Mr. Centone asked Mr. Palma what the likelihood would be to making one of those fields grass for next year. Mr. Palma recognizes that lack of field space is a problem for all teams, and does not know what the solution will be. They will attempt to better address this issue next year. In the meantime, Mr. Sadosky and Mr. Palma recommends that they approach the North Haven Soccer Club to discuss this proposed swap. Mr. Butterworth felt certain that they would be unwilling to give up their fields, but asked if they could get them both in the same room to initiate a discussion. Ms. Sadosky will schedule a meeting to bring everyone together to attempt to come up with a compromise once all fields are confirmed for both clubs.

Mr. Centone asked Mr. Palma if there is grass behind the elementary schools as a possible place for the Lacrosse Club to practice. Mr. Palma is not sure if it is big enough for them to practice. Ridge Rd. field was suggested as a possible field due to its large size, however Mr. Palma stated that teams would be limited to the weather. After it rains, the field remains wet for a week and teams would need to stay off of it.

VIII. Adjournment:

Ms. Stamp asked for a Motion to Adjourn. Motion made by Al Centone, seconded by Joe Capucci. The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

The next meeting will take place on Monday, May 18, 2009.